THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. However, some complaints have been received regarding extortion of money for boarding unreserved coaches.Regular checks are conducted by Railways in association with police against the cornering of seats by coolies and anti-social elements. In addition, unreserved coaches are brought to the platforms in locked condition from the yards and passengers intending to travel in these coaches are asked to follow a queue system.

Rail accidents

†2501. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of minor and major rail accidents during the last six months, along with the number of accidents which have been averted;

(b) the reasons therefor; and

(c) the concrete steps taken/being taken by Government to prevent accidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) and (b) Total number of consequential train accidents during last six months *i.e.* June, 2002 to November, 2002 were 164. Broad *prima facie* causes of these accidents are as under:-

Cause of Accidents	Number of Accidents*
Failure of Staff	97
Failure of other than Railway Staff	38
Equipment Failure	4
Sabotage	10
Incidental	10
Not Established	1
Under Investigation	4
TOTAL :	164

* Figures are provisional.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Statistical figures of consequential train accidents only are maintained and not for averted accidents.

(c) Important steps taken or being taken by Government to prevent accidents:-

(i) A non-lapsable Special Railway Safety Fund of Rs. 17,000/- crs. has been set up for renewal of over aged assets and for safety enhancement works.

(ii) Fouling Mark to Fouling Mark (FM to FM) track circuiting on entire 'A', 'B', 'C', 'D' and 'D Spl.' routes where speed is more than 75kmph. have been completed. Remaining portion of the work is under progress.

(iii) Extended field trials of Anti Collision Device (ACD) have been started on Northern Railway. After successful completion of extended field trials, a decision would be taken for its application on other routes of Indian Railways.

(iv) State of the art technology of Digital Mobile Train Radio Communication has been sanctioned on some important sections for providing duplex radio communication between driver/guard and control.

(v) Walkie-talkie sets have been provided to Drivers and Guards of all trains for faster and bettermeans of communication.

(vi) There has been progressive increase in the use of Tie Tamping and ballast cleaning machines for track maintenance. Also, Track Renewal Trains are being used.

(vii) For monitoring track geometry and running characteristics of the track, sophisticated track recording cars, oscillograph cars and portable accelerometers are being used progressively.

(viii) For detection of rail fractures/weld failures, adequate double rail Ultra Sonic Flaw Detectors have been procured. Self Propelled Ultrasonic Rail Testing Cars are being procured.

(ix) Maintenance facilities for coaches and wagons have been modernised and upgraded at many depots.

(x) Routine Over Hauling Depots have been equipped with ultrasonic testing equipment for detection of flaws in the axles so as to prevent cases of cold breakage of axles.

(xi) Audio-visual publicity campaigns to educate road users on how to make a safe crossing are conducted.

(xii) Periodical safety audit of different divisions by inter-disciplinary teams from zonal headquarters is being conducted.

(xiii) Performance of the staff connected with train operation is being constantly monitored and those found deficient are sent for crash training courses also.

(xiv) Periodical safety drives are conducted to inculcate safety consciousness among the staff and road users.

(xv) Stringent penalty to the extent of dismissal/removal from service is being imposed on officials causing serious accidents.

Unfit bridges for rail traffic

2502. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU): Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total number of bridges on the Indian Rail Network, Zone-wise;

(b) how many of them are over 100 years old and how many are over-aged, dangerous and unfit for rail traffic; and

(c) how many of these are considered distressed bridges and what are the norms and criteria for their maintenance and use for rail traffic?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a)

Zone	Central	Eastern	Northern	North Eastern	North-east Frontier	South-ern	South Central	South Eastern	Western	Total
No. of Bridges	13151	8361	19747	5573	5735	18736	14865	19194	14222	119984

(b) There are 51340 bridges which are over 100 years old. None of them are over-aged and dangerous and unfit for rail traffic.

(c) As on 1.4.2002, there are 527 bridges which have been classified as distressed as per norms. These bridges are sanctioned for rehabilitation which is carried out on priority. If necessitated, suitable speed restrictions